1: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH5 Tehuelche SH5

304 Prichard (1902, p. 92) states that children's heads were so bandaged as to produce [intentionally?] flattening of the back of the skull. Two types of cradle were used: a flat cradle, apparently of ladder type (Vignati, 1938 a, pp. 73-74), to which the infant was tied, and which could be swung from the roof of the toldo by means of thongs attached to its four corners; a curved wicker cradle (fig. 20) placed, with the child in it, on the horse's haunch behind the mother when she traveled horseback (cf. Vignati, 1938 a, for details). Parents were often known by the name of their child (Musters, 1871, p. 177).

[551]

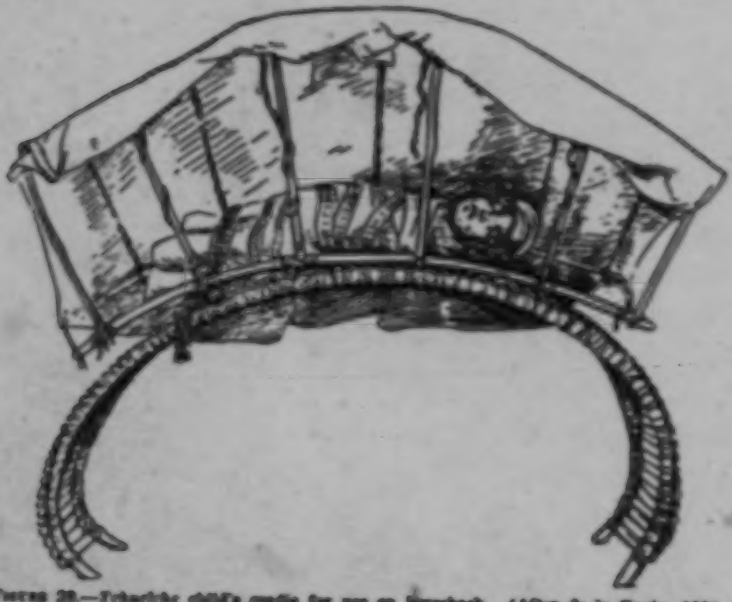

FIGURE 20.—Tehuelche child's cradle for use on horseback. (After de la Vaux, 1901, p. 288.)

852 At the birth of a child, wealthy parents summoned the medicine man, who painted himself white and bled himself in the temple, forearm, or leg with a bodkin; a special tent, the "pretty house," was erected; mares were slaughtered and a feast held; toward evening, a fire was lighted in front of the pretty house, and to the accompaniment of drum and musical bow, the men, wearing ostrich plumes on their heads and a bell-studded strap from shoulder to thigh, danced four at a time (Musters, 1871, p. 176; 1872, pp. 199-200). A horse was killed at the eruption of a child's first teeth (Viedma, 1837 b, p. 78). If a child hurt itself playing, a "pretty house" was erected, mares were slaughtered, and a feast dance were held (Musters, 1872, pp. 201-202).

[301 535] [155]

1: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SHS Tehuelche SHS

Education.—Children were indulged and seldom corrected. Whether the *Tehuelche* ever had the Elel bugaboo rite (cf. infra under *Puelche*, Education) is uncertain. Gusinde (1926 a, p. 310; 1931, p. 1063) was told by the *Tehuelche* of the upper Río Gallegos, to whom he paid a very brief visit in 1924, that they had a rite called, as among the *Ona*, klikneten; the rite was held in a tent covered with guanaco skin, and face covers of feathers were used instead of the *Ona* masks. Field work on the point here raised is imperative, to gather details, and to determine, if possible, whether this rite is an ancient *Tehuelche* one or one introduced more recently by immigrant *Ona*. (Cf. supra Introduction, on *Ona* immigration into Patagonia.)

Girls' puberty rite.—The *Tehuelche* had a simple puberty rite for girls. This first menses rite, as described in detail by Musters from personal observation (1871, pp. 76–78), followed the general pattern of the birth rite as regards painting and bleeding by the medicine man, erection of the "pretty house," slaughter of mares with feast, evening bonfire, dancing in fours by plumed and girdled men to instrumental accompaniment (pl. 39, *bottom*). The main differences were: The girl was placed in seclusion in the "pretty house," and the old women sang while the men danced.

D'Orbigny (1833–47, 2:177–178) describes the *Tehuelche* first menses rite as consisting chiefly of greetings to the girl by all of the tribe, of the distribution of horse meat by her to them, and of ablutions by the girl in the nearest stream with only her mother and other female relatives and the female shaman present. Viedma (1837 b, p. 78) noted the slaughter of a horse at first menses; Pozo (1780, ed. Lehmann-Nitsche, 1916, p. 11), the seating of the girl in a public place, a dance around her, and the sacrifice of a mare; Lista (1879 b, p. 83), a feast lasting several days, a dance around a bonfire, and libations; Cordoves (1903, p. 47), tent(s) painted red.

Muñiz (1917, p. 266) reported two small huts, with the girl seated in one, and a young man with the title of "king" armed with a whip and bolas, who castigated the men or women who executed poorly the dance around the fire between the two tents. Muñiz ascribed this rite to the Pampean Indians in general, not specifically to the *Tehuelche*. The role of the "king" in it suggests that it may have been exclusively *Puelche*, or else *Tehuelche* influenced by *Puelche*. (Cf. Elel first menses rite, pp. 165–166.)

Marriage.—See page 149.

Death observances.—The most common form of disposal of the dead in the Patagonian area was cairn burial on a hilltop, the body resting on the surface of the ground with knees to thorax; other forms were sand interment and cave and crevice disposal. Some belongings were buried with the dead.

1: Cooper K-4 (no date) 1946 [illegible] Telemachus 545

[p. 160 6r]

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

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THE "PRETTY HOUSE" AND DANCE.

[facing p. 61]

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

881 wife had a large iron pot bubbling on the fire, containing some
252 of the blood mixed with grease. When the mess was nearly cooked, we added a little pepper and salt, and commenced the feast. Previous to this I had felt a sort of repugnance to eating horse, as perhaps most Englishmen—except, indeed, the professed hippophagists—have; but hunger overcame all scruples; and I soon acquired quite a taste for this meat.
881 On this occasion everybody ate where they liked, in their
535 own toldos. Casimiro informed me, after the meal was concluded, that there would be a dance in the evening. I looked forward with great anticipation to this 'small and early,' and shortly saw some of the women proceed to collect a considerable quantity of firewood, which was placed outside the tent. Presently, towards dusk, a fire was made, first outside the sacred precincts. The women all sat down on the grass round about, but at some distance from the men, who were all seated on the grass, except four and the musicians. The
[534] orchestra consisted of a drum made by stretching a piece of hide over a bowl, also a sort of wind instrument formed of the thigh-bone of a guanaco, with holes bored in it, which is placed to the mouth and played, or with a short bow having a horsehair string. When all was ready, some of the old
[533] hags all the time singing in their melodious way, the band struck up, and four Indians, muffled up in blankets, so that
[301] their eyes only were visible, and their heads adorned with ostrich plumes, marched into the ring, and commenced pacing slowly round the fire, keeping time to the music. After two or three promenades, the time gradually quickened, until they went at a sort of trot; and about the fifth round, dancing fast to the music, they threw away their mantles, and
[302] exhibited themselves adorned with white paint daubed all over their bodies, each having a girdle of bells extending from
[301] the shoulder to the hip, which jingled in tune to their steps. The first four consisted of the chiefs Casimiro, Orkeke, Crime, and Camillo, who, after dancing with great action (just avoiding stepping into the fire), and bowing their plumed

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

881 heads grotesquely on either side to the beats of the drum,
535 retired for a short time to rest themselves, after which they appeared again and danced a different step. When that was over, four more appeared, and so on, until every one, including the boys, had had a fling. Sometimes, to give greater effect, the performers carried a bunch of rushes in one hand. About nine P.M., everybody having had enough, Casimiro gave the sign. The band stopped playing, and all retired to bed. The dancing was not ungraceful, but was rendered grotesque by the absurd motions of the head. It was strictly confined to the men, the women being only allowed to look on.

133 On the second day's march from the scene of my first Indian ball we crossed a rocky ridge abounding with a description of vesicular lava; the ridge ran out from the southern limits of the valley and terminated in precipitous cliffs, round the base of which wound the river. The surface of the ridge was fissured in many places with deep chasms like Alpine crevasses, on the brink of one of which my horse stopped just in time to escape a fall. The caravan had gone a more circuitous route to take advantage of the lowest and easiest crest. On the other side of the ridge the valley suddenly spread out to the extent of several miles, and on the western horizon a line of snowy peaks was visible, their summits capped with clouds: this was our first view of the Cordillera. The low ground was cut up by streams and small lakelets of water, formed by the overflow of a small fork of the river, which glistening in the afternoon sunshine presented a beautiful silvery appearance, very refreshing to the eye wearied with alternate gazing on withered
484 grass and black volcanic rocks. However beautiful to look at, this scene would clearly prove difficult travelling, so a halt was called, and our course debated on; ultimately it was resolved to cross the river and encamp on the northern bank, where the ground was higher and free from floods, so loads were carefully adjusted, and children transferred to the arms of the men, to give the women more freedom of action;

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

our toldo in due form amidst a curious crowd, all eager to look at him, while he preserved a grave and stolid demeanour. After the usual ceremonious formalities, he sat down, and by means of an interpreter stated himself to be a son of Quintahual, a chief residing at present about four marches to the north. His father had with much pleasure received the courteous message sent by Casimiro, and it would give him equal gratification to welcome the Tehuelches; but he signified a desire first to meet Casimiro alone. This the latter monarch did not appear to see in the same light—if I may be allowed the expression—as it seemed to forbode no good intentions; but he replied evasively, and thus the colloquy terminated.

This Indian was about the middle height, dressed in a coloured poncho, with a silk handkerchief round his head. His features were regular, with restless sparkling black eyes, and complexion about the same as that of the Gauchos of the Rio de la Plata. He wore his hair cut short, and his general cleanly appearance afforded a strong contrast to the flowing locks and paint-bedaubed bodies of the Tehuelches.

Giving up my sleeping-place to him, we soon made him at home, and, after he had had some dinner, we proceeded in company to watch the dancers, who were vigorously stepping out round the fire in front of the *manáil* tent. Here we were joined by Jaukechan, whose knowledge of the Araucanian language enabled us to maintain a conversation. Presently, by particular request, I joined Golwin (White) and two others in the dance, coming out in full costume of ostrich feathers and girdle of bells, and properly painted, to the great delight of the Indians. My performance elicited general applause; and at last all retired for the night, myself taking my saddle-gear and sleeping under a bush near the toldo.

After a delicious breakfast of fried fish, cooked most skilfully by Meña, we prepared to march again, the *chaoqui* bidding us farewell for the present, and by nine A.M. the

3: Museum T-5 (1869-1870)1872
3985 Tabualche 3915

852 sent to the doctor or wizard of the tribe, and to the cacique and relations. The doctor, after blacking himself with bullaine, and painting himself white, gives the order for the erection of a tent called by the Indians "the pretty house". The women immediately collect together their mantilla, a description of cove blanket, obtained from the Araucanians, and sew them together to form the covering of the tolde; some of the women then place the necessary stakes in the ground to form the tolde, and the young men, taking the mantilla, march several times round the stakes to frighten away the devil, the old women singing and crying in a discordant manner, and then draw the covering over the stakes; horsepoles, with lance pikes and streamers attached, are placed in front, the whole forming a gay-looking tolde. The men then mount their horses, and after a short interval, mares are brought up and knocked on the head in front of the tent, after which the meat is either portioned out to the several families, or cooked on the spot, all being free to come and eat. Towards evening a fire is kindled in front of the mantilla-tent, and 852 535 a dance takes place after the following manner: The men and women sit down at the opposite sides of the fire, except the musicians, who sit in the tent; their instruments consist of a small drum formed by a piece of hide stretched over a bowl, and played on with two sticks, and a wind instrument, formed from the thighbone of a guanaco, with holes bored in it, which is applied to the mouth, and played on with a small wooden bow, having a horse-hair string, after a preliminary tune and howling on the part of the old women. Four Indians, muffled up to their eyes in their mantles, wearing on their heads plumes of the so-called ostrich (*Rhea Darwinii*), step on the scene; they first of all pace majestically round the fire, then quicken their pace to a sort of little trot; after two rounds the time is quickened, they throw aside their mantles, and appear with their bodies naked, except the waistcloth, painted all over, each one wearing also a strap studded with bells, extending from the shoulder to the thigh. At the moment that the mantles are thrown on one side, they dance in quick time to the music in not ungraceful steps, at the same time bowing their plumed heads most grotesquely, in time to the taps of the drum on either side. When tired, they resume their mantles, retire for a drink of water, and then come on again dancing a different step. When they are fatigued, four more take their places, and so on, till all present have had their turn. When many Indians are present, these performances often last until a late hour of the night. The women, who only participate as spectators, mark their applause of any particularly good dancer by a howl which may be considered a sort of encore. I have on one or two occasions known these dissipations carried on for two or three evenings in succession.